

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 161675 TOSEC 060024

70

ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /027 R

DRAFTED BY AF/EX:EGKRYZA:AF/W:JKBISHOP:BA

APPROVED BY AF-NATHANIEL DAVIS

S/S- PSHANKLE

----- 121019

O 100043Z JUL 75 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 161675 TOSEC 060024

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN MILITARY OCCUPATION OF US EMBASSY ANNEX,
LAGOS

1. SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT JULY 9 APPROXIMATELY TWENTY ARMED NIGERIAN SOLDIERS SEALED OFF THE TEN STORY EMBASSY ANNEX ADJACENT TO THE CHANCERY IN DOWNTOWN LAGOS AND ENTERED THE GROUNDS BUT NOT THE ANNEX ITSELF. THEY SUBSEQUENTLY PROHIBITED THE ENTRY OF EMBASSY STAFF, WHILE PERMITTING THOSE WITHIN THE ANNEX TO DEPART. ONE MARINE GUARD REMAINED IN THE ANNEX.

2. THE ANNEX IS OWNED BY THE STATE OF LAGOS AND LEASED PREPAID TO THE US GOVERNMENT THROUGH DECEMBER 1976. IT HOUSES THE CONSULAR SECTION, USIS, USAID, FAA, THE AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE AND ELEMENTS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION. AS PART OF THE PREMISES OF A DIPLOMATIC MISSION, THE BUILDING IS INVIOABLE UNDER THE TERMS OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION.

3. FACED WITH A SHORTAGE OF OFFICE SPACE, THE FMG HAS EXPRESSED OCCASIONAL INTEREST DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 161675 TOSEC 060024

IN ACQUIRING THE ANNEX. HOWEVER, NIGERIAN ATTENTION TO THIS ISSUE WAS SPORADIC, AND WE ASSUMED WE WOULD NOT BE

FORCED TO MOVE OUT OF THE BUILDING UNTIL A NEW CHANCERY

WAS READY, OR OUR LEASE EXPIRED. THE ISSUE CAME TO A HEAD ON APRIL 8, 1975 WHEN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING OFFICIALLY SERVED NOTICE IT WAS REQUISITIONING THE BUILDING FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES EFFECTIVE APRIL 14. CITING THE VIENNA CONVENTION, WE REPLIED WE COULD NOT MEET THIS DEADLINE. ON JUNE 14 COMMISSIONER OF WORKS AND HOUSING OBASANJO GAVE US ONE WEEK'S NOTICE TO VACATE THE ANNEX. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH FMG OFFICIALS WE LEARNED THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO PROVIDE US WITH SUBSTITUTE QUARTERS. ON JUNE 24 AMBASSADOR EASUM GAVE SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRIES OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING A NOTE EXPRESSING THE US GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO BE AS COOPERATIVE AS WE COULD IN RESPONDING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE, CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN NEEDS. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTOOD IT WOULD BE ALLOWED SUFFICIENT TIME TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE FMG THE MODALITIES OF TRANSFER TO THE ALTERNATIVE SPACE OFFERED BY THE GOVERNMENT. PRIOR TO TODAY'S ACTION THE EMBASSY HAD BEEN TRYING FOR MORE THAN A WEEK TO SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TO DISCUSS COSTS AND TIMING OF VACATING THE ANNEX.

4. UNSUCCESSFUL IN EFFORTS TO HAVE THE SOLDIERS WITHDRAWN DURING THE EARLY MORNING, AMBASSADOR EASUM CALLED ON PERMANENT SECRETARY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IYALLA SOON AFTER BUSINESS BEGAN WITH A "STERNLY WORDED" DIPLOMATIC NOTE. IYALLA ADVISED THAT THE NOTE NOT BE DELIVERED FORMALLY BECAUSE, HE STATED, AN ORDER HAD BEEN ISSUED TO REMOVE THE TROOPS. AMBASSADOR EASUM ACCEPTED THIS ADVICE. SEVEN HOURS LATER THE TROOPS STILL WERE IN PLACE.

5. ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS CALLED IN THE NIGERIAN CHARGE AT NOON AND TOLD HIM OF THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE US GOVERNMENT VIEWED THE FMG'S VIOLATION OF OUR DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY AND URGED HIM TO REQUEST HIS GOVERNMENT TO REMOVE ITS TROOPS IMMEDIATELY. AN HOUR LATER THE CHARGE TELEPHONED THE DEPARTMENT REPORTING HE HAD SPOKEN PERSONALLY BY TELEPHONE WITH IYALLA WHO TOLD HIM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 161675 TOSEC 060024

GENERAL GOWON PERSONALLY HAD ORDERED REMOVAL OF THE TROOPS. THE CHARGE REPEATED IYALLA'S APOLOGIES FOR THE INCIDENT. OUR EMBASSY REPORTED THAT TROOPS FINALLY WERE WITHDRAWN AT 20:00 HOURS LOCAL TIME.

6. COMMENT - IT IS LIKELY THAT THE TROOPS WERE DISPATCHED WITHOUT THE FULL APPROVAL OF THE FMG BY COMMISSIONER OBASANJO, WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED GREAT IMPATIENCE AND A TENDENCY FOR DRAMATIC ACTION DURING

RECENT MONTHS. WE SEE NO REASON AT THIS TIME TO INTERPRET THIS INCIDENT AS SIGNALLING A SHIFT IN THE FMG'S

BASICALLY FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD THE USG. INGERSOLL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY OCCUPATION, TOSEC, DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE161675
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/EX:EGKRYZA:AF/W:JKBISHOP:BA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750237-0932
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507104/baaaaoug.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 APR 2003 by lzenbel0>; APPROVED <15 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, ABLD, NI, US
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006